Establishment of Helicopter Division under DGCA

4196. SHRIMATI SUKHBUNS KAUR: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether despite the fact that there are some 130 helicopters in operation in the country, there is no helicopters division duly set up with Government, nor is there any regular helicopter pilot training facility in place;

(b) if so, at what stage the proposal for setting up a helicopter division under the Directorate General of Civil Aviation has been pending and since when it is so pending; and

(c) whether following the helicopter accident involving the life of the former Lok Sabha Speaker Shri GM.C. Balayogi, it was decided to hold refresher and training courses for chopper pilots, if so, the steps since taken in that direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) In civil *ab-initio* helicopter pilot training is presently carried out at Rotary Wing Academy (RWA) at HAL Bangalore. Majority of helicopter pilots are trained in defence establishments. For training on specific type of helicopters the pilots go to manufacturer of that type of helicopter.

The proposal for setting up of helicopter cell in office of DGCA is under consideration of the Government.

(c) Refresher courses are compulsory for all the pilots flying in the country. Regarding *ab-initio* training a committee consisting of experienced pilots was formed. The committee has compiled the training syllabus for specific roles. DGCA is examining this report.

Report of the Irani Panel on new Company Law

4197. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether JJ Irani Panel has looked into modifications required based on the suggestions received from industry, regulators, institutions, experts, etc. on the concept of the proposed new Company Law;

(b) if so, what are the recommendations made by the panel;

(c) whether it is a fact that the penalty imposed in case of mis-statement

in prospectus and fraudulent inducement to persons investing money is too cosmetic; and

(d) if so, whether Government are considering to strengthen this provision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA): (a) to (d) The Ministry placed a Concept Paper on Company Law on the website of the Ministry on 04-08-2004 with a view to obtain the views of stakeholders and general public on the proposed revision of the Companies Act, 1956. Many organizations and individuals indicated their comments. These have been placed before an Expert Committee headed by Dr J J Irani to advise the Government on the revision of the Companies Act, 1956. The-work of the Committee is in progress. The report of the Expert Committee, which would cover various aspects of the legal framework for corporate entities and remedies for violation of the same including provisions of penalities, is expected to be available with the Government by May 2005.

Enforcement and Genesis of VAT System

4198. SHRI RAM NATH KOVIND: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Value Added Tax (VAT) regime has been enforced *w.e.f.* 1st April, 2005;

(b) benefits expected to accrue to consumers under the VAT regime;

(c) which other countries adopted VAT and years of their respective adoption; and

(d) when did Government first proposed to introduce VAT in India and how the concept proceeded henceforth, particularly the details of the Committees/Study Group/Task Force constituted, if any, their constituents, and summary of the observations/recommendations made by each of these entities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) VAT has been introduced in 21 States/Union Territories *w.e.f. 1*st April, 2005.

(b) VAT is a simple, transparent, multi-stage tax with input tax credit, which eliminates cascading of taxes and avoids consequent price escalation. Further, as decided by the Empowered committee of State Finance Ministers, it is expected that a number of State level taxes on